

IN THE CLAIMS

Please cancel claim 23 without prejudice and amend claims 1, 14 and 21 as follows.

Sub 1  
B1  
1. (Twice Amended) A method for merging partially filled ATM cells, comprising the  
2 steps of:  
3 removing a first partially filled ATM cell from an ATM cell stream;  
4 removing a second partially filled ATM cell from the ATM cell stream; and  
5 merging the first partially filled ATM cell and the second partially filled ATM  
6 cell into a third ATM cell having a header that includes information indicative of the  
7 merging method used [number of partially filled ATM cells contained within the third  
8 ATM cell].

Sub 14  
B2  
14. (Twice Amended) An ATM network, comprising:  
2 a first node configured to identify partially filled ATM cells within an ATM cell  
3 stream passing through the first node and to merge two or more of the partially filled  
4 ATM cells in the cell stream into a merged cell the merged cell having a header that  
5 includes information indicative of the merging method used [number of partially filled  
6 ATM cells contained within the merged cell]; and  
7 a second node coupled to the first node and configured to identify a merged ATM  
8 cells and to split the merged ATM cell into two or more partially filled ATM cells.

Sub 21  
B3  
21. (Amended) An ATM cell, comprising:  
2 a payload including information from two or more partially filled ATM cells; and  
3 a header including information indicative of the merging method used to construct  
4 the ATM cell [number of partially filled ATM cells contributing the information within  
5 the payload].